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THE
Commonweal

Harold C. Hinton

China: A Dragon Rampant

The Catholic Press

Robert G. Hoyt

John O'Connor

Report from Washington

William V. Shannon

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The Cardinal Newman Foundation of New York

February 15, 1963

To the Editors of The Commonweal:

THANKS FOR MICHAEL NOVAK'S ARTICLE ABOUT CATHOLIC STUDENTS AT NON-CATHOLIC COLLEGES! (1/25/63)

Your readers who share his concern for these students can personally and immediately participate in the *new* Newman Apostolate for them by supporting the Cardinal Newman Foundation of New York.

The Foundation was chartered last March by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York for the purpose of offering to students in the New York area the kinds of assistance the article describes as urgent.

The Foundation will immediately award a $2,000 GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP to a Catholic candidate for the Ph.D. who is well formed in the Catholic tradition and is preparing to teach in a non-Catholic college. By 1964 it plans to offer at least two of these scholarships.

Another immediate goal of the Foundation is to establish TRAVELLING LECTURESHIPS through which courses in Catholic Thought will be offered either on or close by college campuses.

To raise the money necessary to attract top-flight teachers for its lectureships, funds for its scholarship program and to rent NECESSARY FACILITIES, the Foundation is soliciting Contributing and Life Memberships. Those who donate $100 or more will be CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS, and those who donate $1,000 or more will be LIFE MEMBERS.

The Foundation will be launched formally this month with a series of lecture discussions to be presented by the NEWMAN INSTITUTE, the educational unit of the Foundation, with the cosponsorship of New York's CATHOLIC NEWS. The distinguished roster of speakers will include: HIS EXCELLENCY, THE MOST REVEREND JOHN J. WRIGHT, S.T.D.; DR. FRANK J. SHEED; FR. JOHN COURTNEY MURRAY, S.J.; MSGR. MYLES M. BOURKE; MR. WAYNE COWAN; and MR. WILLIAM FANNING.

The lectures will be held at the Biltmore Hotel on six successive Thursdays in Lent, beginning February 28th and ending April 4th. Contributing and Life members of the Foundation will receive complimentary registration for the entire series. Regular subscription will be $20.

Sincerely,

Frank W. Demuth, President
Ferdinand Setaro, Director
(Msgr.) James Edward Rea, Chaplain

P.S. All contributions and inquiries should be addressed to THE CARDINAL NEWMAN FOUNDATION OF NEW YORK, Room 103, Earl Hall, Columbia University, New York 27, New York.

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

'or Catholic Press Month:
'he Commonweal Idea

OR MANY people, we suspect, the annual occur-ence of Catholic Press Month in February is not n occasion of great significance. After decades of ervice, the Catholic press is a solidly established ict. Why, then, take any special note of it? This esponse is understandable, but it is not, for all iat, wholly justifiable. As two editors of important iocesan papers point out in this issue, there is still ast room for improvement in the kind of service hich such papers render. More importantly, it is ery easy to overlook the crucial importance of an iformed clergy and laity for the well-being of hurch and society. In our age of the mass man, of onflicting ideologies and of rapid social and tech-ological change, the way of sanity can only be that the informed and inquiring mind.

For the Christian, the need for understanding is o less urgent than for anyone else. Indeed, as one lessed with faith, he has a particular obligation: o see to it that the Message of Salvation which he as received as a member of the Church is made fficacious in the world. How can that be done? hat is the special challenge of the Catholic press.

Yet the Catholic press is a variegated reality. The sk of the diocesan newspaper is not the same task that of the literary quarterly, the theological urnal or the professional monthly. Each has a fferent part to play; each serves distinct needs. aken together, hopefully, they improve the general vel of Catholic intelligence and national welfare.

Where does The Commonweal fit into this totali-? What special place can a weekly journal of inion edited by laymen fill? These are ques-ons never far from our minds; they are questions hich must ever be asked anew. Moreover, they ecessarily arise because of an important fact about he Commonweal: as a lay-edited magazine The Commonweal has no "official" status within the Church. It cannot speak for the Church nor can it pretend to claim that its editorial views represent even an unofficial consensus. It is a "Catholic publication" only in the sense that its editors are Catholic laymen whose judgments are informed by their dedication to their religious convictions.

YET IN the thirty-eight years since its founding, the editors of The Commonweal have never looked upon its unofficial status as a handicap. On the contrary, it has served to emphasize a vital requirement of Catholic life: that in his day-to-day life the Christian is called upon to apply, as a fallible man, his religious principles to the flux and flow of human events. As a Catholic he has the help of the teaching authority of the Church, whose obligation it is to enunciate and explain those principles. In the end, however, it is the individual himself who must apply them, who must give them life and relevance in the market-place.

Thus when The Commonweal speaks out on a specific problem of the temporal order—on "public affairs, literature and the arts"—it does not represent *the* Catholic position, but only *a* Catholic position. At times, no doubt, the views of the editors may closely tally with those of a majority of American Catholics; but at other times—and they are not infrequent—they may be shared by very few. Such considerations of popularity are irrelevant. What matters is that our opinions make some contribution to the common good. In this sense, controversy and debate have been inherent in our role. That is as it should be: vigorous debate is crucial for free men.

Yet if, over the years, The Commonweal has tried to keep clear the channels of open debate on temporal issues, it is impossible not to observe how rapidly those issues have changed from decade to decade. When our first copy appeared on November 12, 1924, Calvin Coolidge had been elected President and the great post-war boom of the twenties

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was sweeping the country. As a minority still not altogether welcome, Catholics were engaged in the great work of achieving full acceptance and assimilation. The possibility of a Catholic President would soon prove to be a false hope. Nothing was heard in those days of "dialogue," of the "age of the laity" or of Catholic self-criticism.

Nonetheless, the ground was being well laid for the work of The Commonweal in the years ahead. From the first, these pages have been open to non-Catholics. From the first week of its existence, The Commonweal has believed that understanding between Catholics and non-Catholics is essential—and that, in particular, Catholics must be ever prepared to profit from the thought of those men of good will who do not share their religious beliefs.

No less important, by its refusal to bless the forces of Franco (or his opponents either) during the Spanish Civil War in the thirties, or those of Senator McCarthy here at home in the fifties, The Commonweal made clear that it was prepared to speak out when any signs of Catholic hysteria appeared to be casting reason out of the door. Oddly enough, however, in earlier decades The Commonweal's consistent espousal of the papal social encyclicals was as much a source of opposition and distrust as its rejection of some popular Catholic heroes.

Still, if the problems of American Catholics have changed drastically over the years, one change is especially noteworthy. Prior to the 1950's—though a great residue remains—American Catholics were prone to be defensive about their religion. There were good reasons for this: the forces of nativism seemed a permanent part of American life. What this meant was that a considerable part of Catholic thought was devoted to showing the compatibility of Catholicism and democracy. It also meant that Catholics were apt to ignore their own deficiencies.

In recent years, much of this has changed. For the first time, American Catholics are now willing to take a close look at their own performance, to measure their ideals against the reality of their actions. At the same time, a new awareness of the importance of the laity in the Church has burst upon the scene with astonishing force. Taken together these changes have meant a period of intense ferment, of bold thought and an honest examination of conscience. These changes, have, we believe been reflected in the thinking of the editors of The Commonweal as well as in the writing of many of its contributors. But for our part they would not have been possible without the work of those earlier editors who established a tradition of confronting directly the challenges of the times.

Perhaps at bottom it is this drive for confrontation which has earned for The Commonweal the reputation of being a "liberal" weekly. It is not a description we would disavow. On the contrary, as nothing else ever could, the great wisdom of Popes Pius XII and John XXIII seems to us to have swept away forever the notion that the Catholic must only protect and preserve; or that the modern world is alien to the Church. No: the Catholic must be a "man for all seasons." That is what we stand for.

WASHINGTON REPORT

Paradise Lost in the Senate

THROUGHOUT January, the Senate of the United States was like the garden of Eden before Adam's fall. No committees were appointed, no issues debated, no work accomplished. Senators chatted on the floor about ethereal subjects without heat or temper "and thought it no shame." No one acknowledged that sin could exist in this paradisiacal place.

The thought that the Senate was only an assembly of ninety-eight mortal men and two attractive but equally mortal ladies who should organize themselves to exercise their limited powers in accordance with some sensible rules, taking into account their sinful natures and trying to avoid disabling vices such as filibusters—this thought was, as Joe McCarthy used to say, unthinkable. Vice President Lyndon Johnson, constitutionally required to preside over this assembly and help it get on with its business, refused even to point out the tree of the forbidden fruit. "The Senate is and we are. . . ." Beyond that, the Vice President would say nothing.

Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, benign and innocent, said change was desirable but he knew not how to bring it about. Since neither Mrs. Neuberger nor Mrs. Smith proved to be as venturesome or as influential as Eve, the men of the Senate floated, so many Adams before the fall.

It all had to end sometime and it did. The serpent arrived shortly after four o'clock Thursday, January 31. The Senate voted to reject the contention of the liberals that at the start of each new Congress the Senate has the constitutional right to shut off debate by a simple majority vote for the purpose of adopting rules. The Senators thereby took leave of the garden of Eden, and so shall we of this metaphor.

An insurgent group of modern-minded Senators representing mostly big urban states and drawn from

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both parties has been trying to break the grip which the conservative Southern Democrats and their allies have over the Senate. The co-sponsors of the resolution calling for an end to debate by a majority vote (instead of by two-thirds of those present as is now the rule) were Senators Humphrey (D-Minnesota) and Kuchel (R-California). Their most articulate supporters on the floor have been Senators Clark (D-Pennsylvania) and Javits (R-New York).

The Southerners have tradition on their side and they occupy an entrenched, privileged position because their seniority on many committees gives them important leverage in dealing with doubtful colleagues. The urban insurgents have on their side the backing of a popular majority. But they have made the fundamental miscalculation of waging their battle over a procedural issue. This is their enemy's chosen ground because a procedural question, by its very nature, is technical, precedent-laden, a matter for insiders. On this kind of issue, tradition speaks with a commanding accent and the voice of the popular majority outside is a distant echo dimly heard. The insurgents find themselves battling on this inhospitable ground largely, as often happens in political controversies, because of a freak of circumstance.

BACK IN 1948, after Harry Truman won his spectacular victory in considerable part because of heavy Negro support, Northern Democrats felt particularly obligated to follow through on his civil rights promises. But in the Congress of 1949-50, they found themselves checkmated by a prolonged Southern filibuster. If this obstacle were to be broken, it seemed essential to revise Senate Rule 22 which governs how debate may be terminated. However, a motion to revise this rule is itself subject to a filibuster.

The only escape from this impasse was to argue that at the beginning of each new Congress the Senate has no rules and until rules are adopted, the Senate is operating under standard parliamentary procedure as set forth in various manuals, such as Roberts' Rules of Order. Under these circumstances, debate can be terminated at any time if someone moves the previous question.

Having hit upon this solution, the insurgents have tried, with one exception, every two years for the last decade to put it into effect, but without success. (One can easily imagine the Southerners rumbling over Roberts' Rules of Order? But this is the Senate of the United States, not a garden club.") The Southerners contend that since only one-third of the members are up for reelection each two years, the Senate is a continuing body and has no need to adopt new rules at the beginning of each session.

The organizations interested in civil rights such as the NAACP, the Americans for Democratic Action, the church groups, the Jewish civic organizations, and the more liberal trade unions have an emotional commitment and a bureaucratic vested interest in this parliamentary strategy despite its repeated lack of success. It is questionable whether the insurgent politicians themselves still share this enthusiasm. Certainly their desultory and disorganized performance in the past month has not demonstrated either the élan or the skillful in-fighting on which a parliamentary campaign of this kind must finally depend for its success. Try as they may and high-minded as they are, lobbyists for private organizations cannot successfully mastermind this kind of legislative contest in which minute-by-minute maneuver rather than substance counts the most.

IN TWO respects, the liberal insurgents have their priorities wrong. A filibuster protects minorities, but except on the racial issue the South is never in a minority in the Senate. A minority is usually made up of liberals. Cloture has never been successfully invoked against the Southerners on a civil rights bill, but it was voted last summer to silence the liberals who opposed the communications satellite bill as a "giveaway" to the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. There have been several times in the past decade when the liberal insurgents were sorely tempted to resort to the filibuster to prevent a reactionary majority from exercising its will, but except for last summer they refrained so as not to contradict their formal anti-filibuster position. Among these occasions of potential liberal filibusters were the passage of the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950, the McCarran Immigration Act of 1952, and the natural gas bill of 1956. In the long run, it would have served the public interest if a resolute minority had been able to prevent the passage of these measures. Orderly, democratic, and time-saving procedure—the ostensible cause for which the insurgents have been campaigning this past month—is not necessarily the highest good.

Secondly, if the real objective is to enact civil rights legislation, experience has demonstrated that a dispute over parliamentary procedure which bores the public is not the way to obtain it. The existing strategy presupposes that there is a coherent, concerted majority in the Senate eager to work its will on behalf of justice for the Negro and frustrated only by an artful, filibustering minority. There is, in fact, no such majority. Civil rights engages two opposing minority blocs in the Senate with the balance of power held by a diffuse, shifting middle group. The problem for the liberal insurgents is to bring to bear their political strength in the country in some effective way upon this middle group.

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

(William V. Shannon is The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Washington.)

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Through Rose-Colored Glasses, Darkly

WILL EXPOSURE to self-criticism hurt the morale of Catholic students? That's the question a lay columnist in a diocesan paper put to himself recently, promptly answering it with a ringing affirmative.

For my part, I'm not worried about the effect of Catholic self-criticism on the morale of students—quite the contrary. But self-criticism obviously bothers some non-students very much, and their cries of anguish could have bad effects. On the one hand, their protests might choke off self-criticism entirely, and this would be disastrous. Or, on the other hand, their overly defensive reaction might make the rest of us forget the real progress that is being made, and this would be bad too. I am, therefore, writing this column strictly for them, telling them the kind of thing they apparently want to hear.

First of all, of course, the thing for critics of the self-critics to do is to ignore or belittle all without exception, from Monsignor John Tracy Ellis on down. Point out that Catholics are no more guilty of various and sundry lapses than Protestants or Jews. Better yet, ask if Elks go around criticizing fellow-Elks, or Rotarians fellow-Rotarians. Above all, accentuate the positive, and make claims like the following, in season and out of season:

Insist that the reforms in the liturgy and Rome's encouragement of the liturgical movement have been enthusiastically received by American Catholics. Participation, dialogue Mass, congregational chant, evening Mass—all these things have been hailed with delight by priests and people all over the country. The parish which does not reflect the spirit of liturgical reform is the exception, not the rule. And if most people say little or nothing has changed in their parish, it just shows how tricky statistics are.

Bear in mind that this is the Age of the Laity and point out that the layman's role is fully realized on all sides. His advice is sought on matters large and small, particularly on issues which most affect him, ranging from parish affairs to such weighty matters as federal aid to parochial schools. His particular vocation in the temporal order is recognized and honored, and he is encouraged in it by priests and bishops alike. Deny completely that there is any problem of apathy on the part of the layman himself.

Pay no attention to criticism of Catholic education. Most of the critics of Catholic higher education are themselves past or present professors or Catholic college presidents; what do they know? And as for those who suggest that even religious education on the parochial school level sometimes leaves much to be desired, ignore them completely. After all, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and have we not produce hundreds of thousands of apostolic-minded Catholi laymen, ready and anxious to change the world? An is not American life distinguished by the large numbe of Catholics who play important roles, men to whom a other Americans are glad to listen? (No, no, *not* th President—he went to Harvard.)

And what difference does it make if non-Catholi groups complain that it is hard to get Catholics t participate in civic affairs? What if secularists and nor believers often seem to show more devotion to the com mon good than most Catholics? You can always poir out that the Catholics are probably at church makin a visit; let the critics knock that if they dare.

Ignore completely the charge that many Catholi know more about the American Legion's approach t Communism than they do about the papal encyclical So maybe the general reception given to *Mater Magistra* was not enthusiastic, and maybe study clul on the encyclical are few and far between. The real re son for this, you can note, is that American Catholi are so steeped in Catholic social thought that they dor need any more.

Don't pay any attention to criticism of the Cathol press, either. I know many editors say that the se criticism of recent years has helped Catholic periodica immeasurably, but ignore them; they're biased. Ev if we never twisted anyone's arm, I'm sure the circul tion of the Catholic Press would be just as larg Wouldn't it?

As for all that cultural criticism, don't give that second thought either. Just look at all the Americ writers who keep turning out great Catholic nove plays and movies. Why, these days a good Catholic bo can be expected to sell as many as five thousand copi With only forty million American Catholics, what those critics want?

Finally, there is the Pope and the Ecumenical Cou cil. This is a little tougher, but you can handle Granted, a lot of bishops and theologians said thin in Rome that made the American self-criticism see pretty mild, but don't take them too seriously. No mat what happens, insist that the Council's theme of refo and renewal is great, but only for those countries whi really need it—certainly not for us.

The above, then, is my special present to the ove sensitive critics of self-criticism. And if anyone is fool enough to take such nonsense seriously, I suggest keep the column on file for regular re-reading. May it will help his morale while other Catholics go ab the work of reform and renewal that needs to done.

JAMES O'GA

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China: A Dragon Rampant

The Chinese Communist Dream of Asian Hegemony Has Deep Roots

HAROLD C. HINTON

COMMUNIST CHINA seems to have a remarkable ıbility to maximize its international impact in the teeth ıf domestic difficulties and an unusual proficiency at letecting and playing on the tensions in the ranks of ts adversaries. These skills, plus an evident ambition to ush on toward ultimate pre-eminence not only in the Communist world but in the international community s a whole, mainly account for the paradoxical picture hat China presents today: a country poised on the rink of starvation as a result of population pressure nd an overly ambitious industrialization program, yet hallenging the Soviet Union for leadership of the Communist movement and engaged in an intermittent ocal war with India, in addition to pursuing lesser ac-vities in many other parts of the world. The Chinese ppear determined not to let the outside world write iem off as a major power on account of their domestic ifficulties. On the other hand, Peking does not seem) foment international crises with the aim of diverting ie attention of the Chinese people from those diffi-ulties.

The Chinese Communist dream of hegemony in Asia nd of ultimate world-wide political, if not necessarily ıilitary and economic, pre-eminence seems to have its ots in the mind of Mao Tse-tung as far back as the ıid-1930's, as well as in the traditional Chinese outlook. ı December 1936, Stalin demonstrated his preference ır the interests of the Soviet Union over those of the hinese Communists by pressuring the latter to accept hiang Kai-shek's leadership of a national Chinese re-stance to Japan, one of whose main effects would be ı deter the Japanese from also attacking the Soviet ar East.

In that same month, Mao wrote that the Communist arty "has led and continues to lead the stupendous, ıblime, glorious and victorious revolutionary war. This ar is not only the banner of China's liberation, but is egnant with significance for world revolution. The es of the revolutionary masses throughout the world e upon us. In the new stage of our national anti-panese revolutionary war we will lead the Chinese revolution to its completion and also exert a far-reaching influence on the revolution in the East as well as in the whole world."

BY 1949, when they came to power, the Chinese Communists had not only attained almost complete autonomy, *vis-à-vis* Stalin, in their internal affairs, but had begun trying to use the Soviet Union as a ladder on which to climb toward the fulfillment of their ambitions, at once Communist and nationalist. Soviet objections to being used in this way lie at or near the heart of the current Sino-Soviet dispute, which has reached a point where Soviet writers consistently refuse any longer to use the word unity to describe their relations with the Chinese, who persist in using the term.

It may be argued that a common ideology nevertheless binds the two together, and that since the Chinese consider themselves, if anything, better Communists than the Russians, Peking cannot really be engaged in a challenge to Soviet authority. This argument holds very little water. Calvin and Servetus both called themselves Christians. Divergent interpretations of a firmly-held ideology tend to be a source of tension, not unity.

More to the point is the argument that the Chinese will not consciously kick away the ladder that has served them fairly well and might otherwise continue to serve them, especially since to do so would tend to leave them naked to their enemies. But while this is a persuasive argument from the Chinese standpoint, it has less obvious charm from the Soviet. Khrushchev's patience with the colleague who has been trying to climb on his shoulders with spiked shoes has been wearing thinner and thinner, and his counterpressures on the Chinese have increased fairly steadily since mid-1959. It may also be argued that the basic difference between the two is one relating to revolutionary strategy, or how best to advance Communist interests in countries not now Communist-controlled, and that once the tougher Chinese or the more devious Soviet strategy proves clearly the more effective, both sides will adopt it and the quarrel will end.

The basis of the quarrel, in this writer's opinion, is power and authority, and the relevance of the dispute over revolutionary strategy stems from the desire of each

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disputant to see as many as possible of the hypothetical new Communist states of the future oriented toward itself rather than toward the other. This is an especially compelling consideration in Chinese eyes, since unless the Soviet Union somehow totally discredits itself in the eyes of the international Communist movement the only way in which Peking can realistically hope to surpass Moscow is to use its militant strategy, plus concrete aid and support as bait to attract the allegiance of a sizable number of Communist Parties in the underdeveloped areas.

IN THIS Sino-Soviet competition for influence in the underdeveloped areas, the Indian subcontinent has emerged as perhaps the major focal point. The Chinese almost certainly regard the region as being properly within their sphere and have been annoyed by the Soviet Union's intrusion into it, an intrusion that has been facilitated by India's desperate need for economic aid and by China's inability and unwillingness to provide such aid.

In the mid-1950's, the Soviet Union began to build its policy toward the Indian subcontinent on economic aid to and political support of Indian nationalism and Nehru's Congress as against their various domestic and foreign opponents, including, of course, Pakistan. China began to do almost the opposite: while preserving outwardly friendly relations with Nehru for the time being, to refrain from aiding him, to preserve neutrality as between India and Pakistan on the crucial Kashmir issue, to build a system of military highways near the border, and to cultivate its relations with the regionally fractionized Indian Communist Party and apparently also with East Pakistani regionalism (the Bengali politician, Suhrawardy visited China in 1956, while Prime Minister of Pakistan). In short, the Soviet Union opted for a unified subcontinent, or at least a unified India, whereas China apparently preferred to side with the powerful centrifugal forces in the subcontinent.

The difference in policies is presumably to be explained by different, in fact competitive, objectives. China, a contiguous power, has territorial ambitions in the Himalayas and probably aspires to dominate an impoverished and Balkanized subcontinent. The Soviet Union, an essentially noncontiguous power, apparently wishes to build a counterweight to China, as it seems also to be doing in Indonesia and may be starting to do in Japan, and is content to see India turn Communist in the fairly remote future, when (hopefully) it is reasonably developed and therefore less likely to look to Peking for guidance than to Moscow.

Early in 1957, the Communists in the southern Indian state of Kerala won an electoral victory sufficient to enable them to form a government. This unprecedented event apparently decided Nehru to reinsure his relations with Moscow. He announced a new cabinet on April 17, which happened to be Khrushchev's birthda and also the first anniversary of the dissolution of th Cominform, an organization to which Nehru hac strongly objected. This cabinet included as Defens Minister the extreme leftist, Krishna Menon, who seem to have been one of Nehru's main links to Moscow an was about equally disliked in Washington, Karachi, an Peking.

In the summer and fall of 1959, apparently enrage by Nehru's ouster of the Communist government i Kerala at the end of July and by Khrushchev's undis mayed persistence in a massive aid program to Nehru the Chinese precipitated a minor but dramatic militar crisis along the Sino-Indian frontier. It soon becam clear that the Soviet Union refused to be pressured int abandoning India, and when in early November it wa announced that President Eisenhower would shortl visit India, in addition to ten other Afro-Asian countrie Peking apparently concluded that its pressure on Indi was tending to play into the hands of the United State as well as the Soviet Union. On November 7, accorc ingly, Chou En-lai proposed a nominally temporar compromise settlement of the border dispute: India t retain the eastern sector (the Northeast Frontier Age cy), and China the western (most of Ladakh).

The Indians rejected this proposal in the course c prolonged negotiations held during 1960. At about th time, Menon began to acquire from the Soviet Unic equipment, such as road-building machinery and hig altitude helicopters, that would be useful in strengthe ing the Indian position along the frontier. With the aid c this equipment, the Indian Army began to push forwa in Ladakh in 1961. The Chinese and the Pakistani, bo of whom have border claims and assorted grudg against India, began to show some signs of drawing t gether in the face of the powerful Indo-Soviet alignmer In the fall of 1961, for example, Pakistan voted for tl first time for Communist China's admission to tl United Nations.

IN APRIL of 1962, when the current phase of the Sin Indian border dispute began, Nehru fell ill, and amo the candidates for the succession most prominently me tioned was Krishna Menon. At about the same tim the Indian government indicated that it would not r new a Sino-Indian treaty of 1954 covering trade b tween India and Tibet, on which the Chinese evident relied to help feed their garrison in Tibet. Peking the upon announced that it would hold talks with Pakist on their common frontier (in Kashmir), which accor ing to India is nonexistent, and that its troops wou resume active patrolling along the Sino-Indian front for the first time since 1959.

As a result of this measure, and perhaps also b cause of President Kennedy's reassuring promise June that the United States would not support any i

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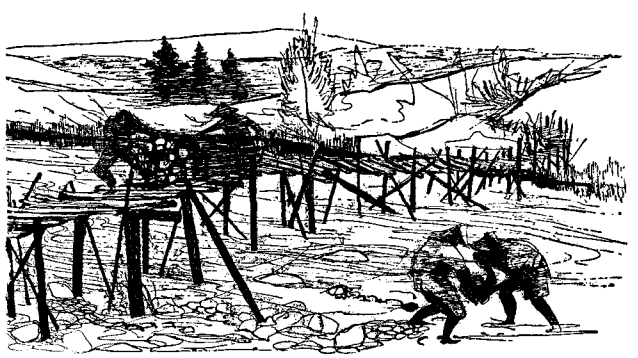
'asion of the China mainland from Taiwan, there was . rash of frontier incidents in Ladakh during the sum- ner. On September 8, Chinese troops crossed the Mc- Mahon Line, the frontier recognized by India in the 'astern sector; on October 12, New Delhi ordered its orces to oust the Chinese from all Indian-claimed erritory. Eight days later, a Chinese counteroffensive egan in both sectors and soon routed the Indians.

What were the Chinese motives? To a considerable xtent Peking was responding to what it regarded as n intolerable threat, comparable to, although less seri- us than General MacArthur's advance to the Yalu in 950, and was giving convincing proof of its determi- ation to retain its holdings in Ladakh.

More fundamentally, the Chinese probably hoped to uin Krishna Menon's prospects (as they did), improve 'akistan's bargaining position over Kashmir (the first 'hinese cease-fire proposal, on October 24, was an- ounced on the fifteenth anniversary of the formation f the Pakistani-dominated state of Azad Kashmir), umiliate India and compel it to compromise its neu- rality and hence its standing in Afro-Asia by seeking upport from the Soviet Union or the United States, nd most important of all to force the Soviet Union to larify its position.

If the Soviet Union supported China, Peking's gain ould be clear and great; if it supported India, it would rand itself in the eyes of Communists and other ex- eme leftists in the underdeveloped areas as being soft n capitalism and lacking in revolutionary spirit. The ffect of the Chinese action on the Indian Communist arty would obviously be disastrous, but Peking was laying for bigger stakes.

EKING's immediate target, Nehru, responded by ap- ealing to both the Soviet Union and the West: to the oviet Union to restrain the Chinese, though not neces- arily to back India openly, and to the British and mericans for arms. The latter he got, as well as Ameri- an endorsement (for the first time) of the Indian osition on the border issue, but at the price of agreeing negotiate on Kashmir with Pakistan, whose leverage a practically everyone else was clearly enhanced by ie crisis.



The Soviet reaction was more complex. Khrushchev was obviously angered by the Chinese assault on the Indian frontier forces. However, the first public Soviet comment on the crisis, on October 25, fell between President Kennedy's statement on the Soviet missiles in Cuba and Khrushchev's retreat on this issue, and therefore came at a time when the Soviet Union was in no position to add a serious controversy with China to its other preoccupations. This statement was thus mildly pro-Chinese and appeared to endorse the Chinese terms for a settlement, but it spoke kindly of India and did not support the Chinese charge that India had committed aggression.

The second major Soviet statement on the crisis, on November 5, came at a time when the threat of war over Cuba had dissipated and the Chinese had begun to denounce Khrushchev's withdrawal of the missiles as "another Munich" and to paint themselves as Castro's only true friend. The Chinese may have hoped for a time that Castro might get control of the missiles, and that they might get control of Castro. The second Soviet statement was, if anything, slightly pro-Indian, in that it refrained from endorsing the Chinese terms for a settlement. It is possible that Khrushchev brought pressure, such as a threat to cut off oil shipments, to bear on the Chinese behind the scenes.

Having set in motion a number of favorable trends, as well as some unfavorable ones, such as an upsurge of Indian national unity, and having begun to approach the point of diminishing returns in their venture, the Chinese announced a unilateral cease-fire on November 20 and soon afterward began a withdrawal in the eastern sector back to the McMahon Line. At the same time, they restated their rather ambiguous proposal of 1959, the net effect of which would apparently be to nullify the recent Indian gains in Ladakh and leave most of that area under Chinese control, but to concede the Northeast Frontier Agency to India.

The Soviet Union has endorsed the cease-fire and the Chinese troop withdrawal, but not the latest version of Peking's terms for a settlement. Thus Khrushchev has apparently avoided impaling himself on either horn of the dilemma presented to him by the Chinese. Nevertheless, his relations with both Peking and New Delhi have been somewhat impaired, and he has probably noted with displeasure the considerable sympathy for the Chinese side displayed by the Communist parties and even some of the self-proclaimed neutral governments of Asia.

Notwithstanding the partial easing of tension on the Sino-Indian frontier, Sino-Soviet relations have continued to worsen. Soviet spokesmen have denounced the Chinese and shored up Khrushchev's support among the European Communist parties at Communist conclaves in Sofia, Budapest, Rome, and Prague. The Chinese have demanded another conference of all Communist

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parties like the one in 1960, at which the rule of unanimity would tend to give them a veto, and Khrushchev's desire for a joint declaration might lead to Soviet compromises.

ALTHOUGH the past might seem obscure enough to satisfy almost anyone, the far murkier future has an undeniable fascination, and a comment on it may be indicated.

The Sino-Soviet controversy came into the open only about 1960, but it began at the time, probably in the 1930's, when Mao Tse-tung decided ultimately to challenge the Kremlin to a struggle for power and authority. By now the controversy is probably irreversible, barring a change of policy, and probably of leadership, on one side or the other. The steady worsening of the visible aspects of Sino-Soviet relations in recent years, combined with a reluctance, especially on the Chinese side, to precipitate a complete break, is understandable, in the writer's opinion, on this basis and on no other.

The question is, how much worse can the relationship become without turning into a total rupture, or even war? The answer is that each side still has a number of cards, short of these extremes, that it has not yet played, some of which it may be saving against a hoped-for succession crisis on the other side. Such a crisis, incidentally, is more likely to occur in Peking than in Moscow.

Various economic sanctions are also available, such as a repudiation by China of its debt to the Soviet Union. Each side can, in addition, be expected to exploit the other's difficulties, such as the Cuban and Sino-Indian border crisis, to embarrass and if possible weaken it, to demonstrate the unviability of its approach to international affairs, and to continue trying to win other parties and factions to its own way of thinking. The issues involved seem too serious for a compromise sufficient to establish Sino-Soviet harmony. In this process of the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations, which may now have passed the point of no return, the Cuban and Sino-Indian border crisis look like major landmarks.

The Catholic Press—I

The Issue Is Greatness

ROBERT G. HOYT

ACCORDING to a recent calculation by John Leo in *The Catholic Messenger* of Davenport, Iowa, there are now about four hundred and twenty Catholic magazines in this country, and the roster still swells by the week—clearly a situation which calls for manning of the dikes. Leo suggests the enlisting and rehabilitation of Ezra Taft Benson, who could then be set to work finding would-be publishers and paying them not to publish. As an alternative he offers the notion of a new organization, "Magazines Anonymous"; any time a member feels the urge to issue a prospectus, he calls for help and a couple of ex-publishers come over and sit with him till the twitching stops. By such means we could hope at least to postpone the day when there will be as many American Catholic magazines as American Catholics.

Possibly out of mistaken tribal loyalty, Mr. Leo fails to mention a related social problem, which may be briefly stated. There are one hundred and eighteen diocesan newspapers in this country. Does this country need one hundred and eighteen diocesan newspapers

The question is put innocently. As readers of thi journal know, there are people like Father Andrev Greeley lying in wait for instances of morbid breast beating by masochistic Catholics who, having learne the lessons taught by Monsignor John Tracy Ellis, nov refuse to learn anything else. By way of protectio against Father G., let it be acknowledged forthwit that many diocesan papers are a lot better than the used to be. Nevertheless, the question raised abov should occasionally be made present to the minds c editors and publishers. Granting that there are mor than forty million American Catholics, one hundred an eighteen Catholic papers is quite a number. One ough sometimes to conjure up a vision of all those separat staffs separately engaged in spending their time an talents and other people's money in an enterprise whic is not, after all, self-justifying.

This mention of numbers and of duplication of effo could lead to a consideration of whether there is som thing to be learned by the diocesan press from th teaching of *Mater et Magistra* on "socialization." seems evident that much more could be done than

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being done in the way of coordination and cooperation. This is by no means a patented personal insight. A number of experiments aimed both at higher quality and at better exploitation of the national market are under way: among them national distribution of tabloid mat supplements, cooperative arrangements among independent papers, development of magazine sections after the model of *Parade* and *This Week*. The idea of a national Catholic daily underwent another public rehashing recently, and there has been discussion of a more modest and possibly more realistic conception, a national news-oriented weekly to serve a purpose and an audience different from those of the existing papers in the field.

BUT THESE are concerns of the publisher, and I want to focus here on more clearly editorial concerns; specifically, on what diocesan papers are for. Not, however, on an abstract level. A great deal of rhetoric has been expended on the purposes of the Catholic press, and most of it, including the share this writer has committed, is useful principally as mood music. There is need for rhetoric, but greater need for periodic fundamental reassessment.

As Father Rawley Myers, editor of the *Southern Nebraska Register* (Lincoln), rather pointedly explained in a recent article for the trade, Catholic weeklies don't often indulge in this kind of self-study. They don't have to; they are brought into being by episcopal fiat and to a large extent maintained by pastoral exhortation. This isn't altogether bad. It produces a freedom from external pressures which editors of other media might well envy. Nor is it altogether inappropriate; the diocesan paper, even when determinedly non-"official" is a teaching instrument whose content and policy ought not to be determined by popular demand.

But freedom to be excellent does not of itself produce excellence. In the absence of marketplace pressures, I will suggest that other pressures and incentives are needed. One of them is external: the goad of criticism. The other is internal, and applies most clearly to lay journalists in the field: the opportunity to be responsible.

Careful, tough, informed criticism of any institution implies a compliment; it suggests that the institution deserves to be taken seriously and that its directors are reasonably honest and open-minded. Dan Herr recently delivered this compliment, well disguised, in his "Stop Pushing!" column in *The Critic*, when he reported on a survey of ninety diocesan papers undertaken at the height of the uproar over James Meredith's efforts to enroll at the University of Mississippi. (The issue he chose was that of October 5; the Oxford rioting had occurred September 30; Governor Barnett's defiance of the Federal government had been declared some days earlier.) Of the ninety, no fewer than fifty-six had nothing whatever to say about the Mississippi crisis. One Iowa paper raised the possibility that the whole mess was caused by imported Yankee agitators. Thirty-three papers, or about a third, saw a duty to take a stand in favor of justice.

No great significance could be found in the silence of any single paper on any single issue; and it is only fair to note that some of the papers on Mr. Herr's blacklist are ordinarily among the most responsible in the country. But when two-thirds of a more than adequate sample of Catholic weekly papers fail to express a judgment on the most significant and dangerous domestic crisis of the year—a crisis with obvious moral implications—one seeks an explanation.

I don't think it likely that all this silence came about because editors were afraid to take a stand. In the first place, it doesn't really take much courage to express an opinion in the pages of a diocesan paper. Secondly, in this instance it would have been possible to advert to the crisis by expressing a mild preference for law and order as against anarchy and bloody rioting; a reasonably non-controversial position in most parts of the country (and, of the non-commenting papers listed by Herr, forty-two were published outside the South).

CONSIDERING the matter, one is led to question whether the *operative* philosophy of much of the diocesan press does not leave out some important elements of its *declared* philosophy. The Press Month kit distributed by the Catholic Press Association for promotional use by its members quotes Pope John XXIII: "The Catholic press exists today above all for an action of presence and testimony. Its presence must be active, intelligent and alert in respect of the innumerable problems posed by present day life. . . ." Another quotation is taken from a speech by Bishop Pedro Cantero of Huelva in Spain: "The Catholic paper must take its place in the perspective of everyday life, be an instrument in the publication of daily news and reflect the lives of men and peoples, their thoughts, their questions, their preoccupations and their hopes. A paper that does not take its news from passing events and gives no answer to the questions of the hour, is a paper doomed to disappear."

Presumably such declarations would gain practically universal agreement among U.S. diocesan editors. In undertaking this survey, Mr. Herr could hardly have invented an event better calculated than the Mississippi crisis to test these same principles in operation. The conclusion seems to follow that they are being honored in the breach.

Dan Herr lists some titles of editorials that did appear that week in papers which did not comment on the antics of Governor Barnett: They dealt with the Rosary, teen-age drinking, the Council, school aid, church unity, Theresa Neumann, National Choir Recog-

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nition Day. On the test of performance one might conclude that the press (and the Church it serves) exists to make men churchy. Mr. Herr was led to reflect on the Press Month motto, "Alert Catholics Read the Catholic Press," and to wonder about the alertness of the papers these alert Catholics are reading. This seems to me to get at the heart of things.

At first I was inclined to believe that editors who ignored the Meredith-Barnett-Kennedy tussle might have done so deliberately on the (highly dubious) ground that as an event in the "temporal order" and having political implications it was outside their province. A colleague suggested the more likely view that they were as interested as everyone else in the crisis and that their hearts were in the right place; but they simply did not react as journalists. Events like the Council or issues like school aid register with them as Catholics; but even an event having the dimensions of the Oxford rioting would not register with them as editors. They lack the instinct to regard non-Church-related current happenings as material to be processed, as actions demanding from them reactions.

In the absence of this instinct, it isn't particularly helpful to enunciate anew the philosophy of the Catholic press about the universal relevancy of the Faith. It *is* helpful, one hopes, to study what the press has done or failed to do in response to a specific challenge. One doubts, however, that Mr. Herr will get the vote of thanks he deserves.

A SOMEWHAT SIMILAR criticism made a couple of years ago leads to a somewhat similar conclusion. Norma Krause Herzfeld, a Washington columnist, compared the differing Catholic reactions (including the reaction of the Catholic press) on two issues which came before the first Kennedy Congress: the school aid question and the proposal to establish an official U.S. disarmament agency. Mrs. Herzfeld did not give statistics, but she was certainly correct in reporting that Catholic papers were "bursting" with articles and editorials on school aid, whereas on disarmament only a "handful" of articles appeared.

The Catholic press was of course justified in giving major attention to the school issue, and it could even be argued that in doing so it was not fighting only for the immediate interests of the Church but also for the common good, which will be affected by the growth or decline of private schools. But if concern for the general welfare supplied some of the drive on school aid, this same concern ought to have been evident in other instances in which self-interest did not appear so clearly. Further, among proposals before that session of Congress, an editor might well have considered the bill to establish a U. S. Disarmament Agency for World Peace and Security as the one most clearly related to Catholic social doctrine; realistic action on disarmament has been favored by the popes since World War I. Ye the silence of Catholic spokesmen, and of the Catholi press, was very nearly total.

It would be utopian, not to say ridiculous, to expec Catholic editors to measure out space to an issue o vital Catholic concern, such as the school question, o the basis of its intrinsic significance in a global an millennial perspective; that is, in mathematically correc proportion to its importance in relation to all othe great issues of public policy. Catholic papers not onl may but must defend the rights of the Church and th interests of Catholics as a group. But an all-out cam paign like the one that filled so many pages in 196 looks at best unrestrained and at worst frenzied whe other issues, involving the very destiny of mankind, d not succeed in capturing at least same share of editoria passion.

In this instance the moral of the story has to be state rather more carefully. Mrs. Herzfeld's critique is offere not as proof but as illustration of a thesis that Catholi editors are subject to a temptation to think of thei papers as house organs and of the Catholic press as "minority press." I don't say we have succumbed; do suggest that we have leaned in that direction; an that, if a higher and nobler conception prevaile throughout the country, the diocesan press would be good deal more visible on the horizon than it now is- more respected, more influential, more effective.

ACCORDING to a now-famous passage in a speec Pope Pius XII gave to journalists in 1950, one purpos of the Catholic press is "to contribute to the formatio of a Catholic opinion within the Church." In fulfillin this function the Pope warned against two opposit errors: "uncontrolled criticism" on the one hand, "mut servility" on the other.

I was reminded of this passage, in a negative wa by a news feature distributed by the NCWC New Service prior to the Council. The writer referred to th criticism some had voiced with regard to the absen of laymen from the preparatory commission dealin with the lay apostolate: those who made this criticisr he explained, "either forgot or did not know that th lay apostolate is by nature under the direction of th hierarchy." I thought this carried interpretive reportin beyond proper limits; and that, typically, the interpr tation tended to defend the institutional against th prophetic element in the Church. Regardless of th merit of the criticism, some of those who made it we far more qualified to discuss the nature of the lay apo tolate than the NC reporter; but, since the Curia's d cision had gone against the critics, it followed that th must have been wrong.

I hasten to concede that the sentence in questio however offensive, is insignificant; and, further, th the news service now carries literally reams of materi

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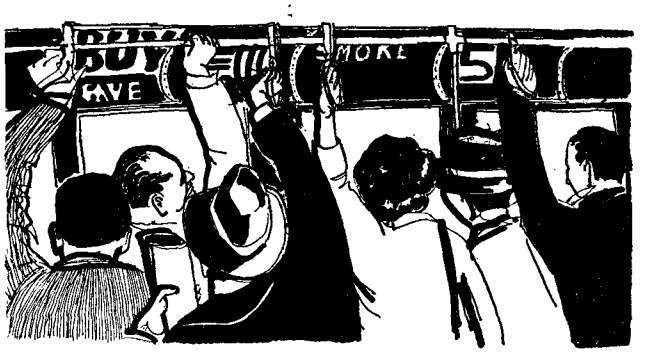
that could properly be labeled "prophetic" in its criticism of institutional defects of the Church. Yet one is reminded often enough that much remains to be done toward working out in practice the meaning of Pope Pius' brief comments on the duty of serving public opinion. Perhaps the best recent example was offered by the conflict between the hierarchy and the ruling political party of Puerto Rico during the 1960 election campaign. This was one time when the Catholic public stood in need of help from the Catholic press, but judging by my own informal survey taken at the time, in most dioceses the help was not forthcoming—even after the way had been well lighted by such journals as *America*. Again the question rises whether editors have given enough thought to what their papers are for.

It would be absurd to suggest that a diocesan paper ought to have the same relationship with the bishop, the chancery office and the hierarchy as a secular daily has with the mayor, city hall and the U.S. government. But it is almost equally improper to think that the paper exists to please one reader only. Ultimately the bishop is responsible for the contents of the paper; but the other readers have rights as subscribers, as Catholics, as persons; and the staff of the paper has duties in both directions.

There is (I have finally concluded) no hope of regularizing or institutionalizing an ideal relationship to balance all these rights, duties and responsibilities. The first necessity, as Pope Pius said in the talk already quoted, is love for the Church. Beyond this—if mute servility and uncontrolled criticism are to be avoided, and if the needs of readers are to be served, if they are to regard the paper as trustworthy and as in some sense their instrument and champion—then (just as in the secular press) the publisher must have a genuine respect for journalism—in this country, for journalism as practiced in the American mode. And the staff needs, besides competence in the craft, a certain self-respect, proper contempt for press agentry in high places, and consciousness of what is meant by the service of public opinion. This can lead to a degree of pushiness. Journalists who are never the least bit pushy run no risks and do little good in the world.

Earlier I suggested that the diocesan press profits when laymen entering the field can look forward to



earning a position in which they can exercise genuine responsibility—not merely as craftsmen but as publicists. In a Press Month article a couple of years ago John Deedy of the *Pittsburgh Catholic* said the laymen now active in the diocesan press are content to be mere technicians; we have no giants like Orestes Brownson and John Boyle O'Reilly. I wonder whether a curmudgeon like Brownson could get a job in the diocesan press today; and whether he would want one.

ONE fundamental reason the newspaper sector of the U.S. Catholic press does not encourage the growth of "giants" is contained in its history. My knowledge of that history is sketchy, but one tendency, now very nearly completed, has been toward the elimination of the independent lay-owned journal. Almost all Catholic newspapers are diocesan papers. This status has great advantages and averts serious difficulties; at the same time, it leads toward a narrow ecclesiasticism of outlook and toward mediocrity in performance unless these temptations are consciously avoided. It also tends to place the status of the lay journalist in doubt.

One would not wish to discourage anyone, green or gray, from considering a career in the Catholic press; and in fact there have been developments in the field which are distinctly encouraging—developments with regard to salary, pensions and insurance, job security and freedom of expression. As far as "perquisites" are concerned, a good many papers offer jobs at least as attractive as comparable positions in the secular press.

At the same time there have been other developments —or rather, incidents—leading at least some of those in the field to question whether optimism all around is the proper mood. The incidents have not been horrendous or shocking. They do suggest that publishers still tend to regard diocesan papers as public relations instruments, and that they are not ready to consider lay journalists as potential Brownsons, even as tame Brownsons. Laymen generally are *hired* to do the work Mr. Deedy considers they should rise above, the merely technical work of making the product look and read like a newspaper.

Mr. Deedy is wholly right in suggesting that the pertinent issue is not competence but greatness. What would it be worth to the Church to have at least a few diocesan organs which could be described in all sobriety as great newspapers? Now there is no ordinance of nature which says priests cannot be great editors if they are given enough time to do the job, and concretely, it seems clear to me that Father Raymond Bosler of the Indianapolis *Criterion* is the nearest thing to a great Catholic editor this country now possesses. But most of the time, at least, one would expect to encounter extraordinary editorial gifts most frequently among those who choose journalism, rather than the priesthood, for their career.

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The moral is clear. Laymen are not easy to handle, need more money, have to be encouraged to acquire the theological culture the work requires, don't command the automatic respect of other lay people, and may permit themselves to be hired away at precisely the wrong moment. Further, to give talent opportunity does not guarantee fruition. But if the diocesan press is to be taken quite seriously, it will be necessary to clarify the status of the lay Catholic journalist, to give him trust, to let him get away with some big mistakes

The Catholic Press—II

A Question of Purpose

JOHN O'CONNOR

SEVERAL recent expressions of concern for the press serve to focus our attention once more on the diocesan newspaper. Concern has been expressed by a diocesan editor who asks if the diocesan press is obsolete; by a magazine publisher who discovers an ostrich-like posture among diocesan editors; by a university professor and Church historian who calls for a re-examination of the official status of the diocesan press. In the light of this attention, it seems to me that we should ask if it isn't high time to consider radical reform and renewal within the diocesan press in order to better serve a renewed Church and a re-forming world.

The coverage of the first months of the Ecumenical Council by the general press prompts this question: must a Catholic any longer read his bishop's newspaper to be well informed? It seems clear to me that the publishers of the diocesan press are, by and large, unaware that an increasing number of educated Catholics—and others of the general community—are risking the occasional inaccuracies to look to the "secular" press for significant news coverage, including interpretation, of the Council. Certain general-audience publications have proven to be able competitors to ecclesiastical organs in the field of depth-reporting (*The New Yorker*, with its famous Xavier Rynne articles; the penetrating insights of *Time* and *Newsweek*). Others have waded through the Council's press releases and come up with succinct and interesting daily copy: notably the N.Y. *Times* and the *Herald-Tribune*.

The hungry interest in these magazines and newspapers (and the job done by several top Catholic magazines) is not only an expression of confidence in the professional competence of these publications but is also a bald indictment of the irrelevancy of diocesan weeklies and a stinging rebuke of their editorial timidity and institutional complacency. The phenomenon of an increased dependence of Catholics on the general media (recall the increased episcopal interest in having Bureaus of Information) serves, in some cases, to relegate the diocesan newspaper to a position of lesser importance, trust and effectiveness. Where the dailies and TV are courted for their voluminous audience, the diocesan press often becomes the johnny-come-lately with Church news, serving it warmed over, days after the dailies and the home TV screen have brought all the significant news to the subscriber.

As Father Rawley Myers, editor of the *Southern Nebraska Register* wrote in the October, 1962 issue of *The Catholic Journalist:* "Our downtown papers welcome Catholic news; they are out looking for it. To be sure, there was a day when much that was Catholic was excluded from the public press; but remember we are not living in the past. Many Catholic papers were founded because our news could not get into the town papers. But this is not then; this is today—and today the secular press, far from mutilating our news, often, because of better staffs, does a better job on pictures and reporting than the Catholic paper. . . ."

BASIC, I believe, to a re-examination of the Church press and the audience it serves is a review of the development of the American newspaper. The American newspaper and the American audience mutually condition each other. Despite their occasional sins, newspapers serve the community well, striving for an informed electorate, holding high the twin torches of freedom of public information and freedom of responsible expression. The record of the U.S. newspaper has been a good one, despite human lapses, and American newsmen, from the Franklin brothers of colonial days to the Alsop brothers of today have served the public well. Journalism as practiced by responsible reporters, columnists, editors and publishers, is a high calling. "You cannot improvise a journalist," says Pope John.

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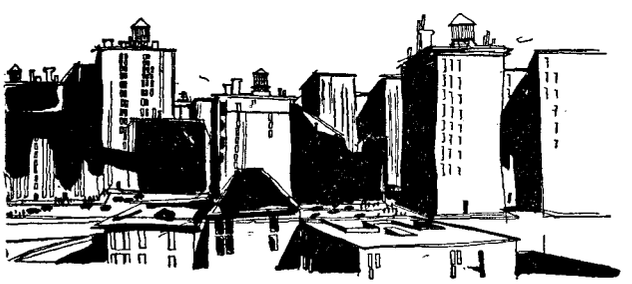
Let us briefly trace the development of the American newspaper, beginning with the Boston's "Public Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestic" in 1690, and see how the Church press is part of this picture. In colonial days the printer-postmaster published a newspaper of mercantile interest, gossip from Europe and England, and official documents. It was mainly a government press. Next came the development of the pamphlet press of the agitating political factions during the revolutionary years, and then later the party press of the infant republic. With the Westward movement came the frontier editor, romanticized in the movies and on TV as an harassed and emaciated idealist who tries to clean up the town against the violence and viciousness of the gambling, grafting, and rustlin' heavy. Those were the days of frontier reform and the booster press—the newspaper as conscience of the community, defender of virtue, seller of goods, chest-beater for new towns and territories, riding inky shotgun on public order.

This messianic sense of responsibility for community growth, health and order on the part of the editor soon ribbed off on the man who went after the news—the reporter. The age of personal journalism saw Greeley, Dana, Bennett and Steffens scribble their signatures across the national mind. Their first loyalty was to the reading public, rather than to a political group or a party line. An advancing technology caused still more changes. Better press techniques, the telegraph and telephone, and swelling urban audiences brought about the mass circulation daily with its omnibus of news, comment, entertainment, scandal-mongering, comics, promotional news stunts, extras and all that came in the "yellow journalism" grab-bag toted by the big riddies of the press empires: Pulitzer and Hearst, and ter the other chain giants, Scripps-Howard, Newhouse and Knight. Finally, the expansion of suburbia nce World War II has seen the growth of suburban wspapers, concentrating on local news, supermarket s, and publicity for community groups.

Within the papers themselves, the reaction to the rsonal journalism of the "star reporter" school was trend toward more "objective" reporting. This, however, allowed for the emergence of the public relations ws manipulator, paved the way for indiscriminate e of publicity handouts, and permitted the rise of formation bureaucracies for propaganda purposes in



business, institutions, and in government itself. In this respect, a critical self-examination by the press following the exposure of totalitarian "information" methods and certain Congressional investigations, served, once again, to underline the importance of news interpretation. The expert analysts and commentators, always there, were thrust to the fore, and "depth reporting" was developed to see that the most informed people in the world were also those who understood what the blizzard of information meant.

The postwar press scene looks, then, something like this: the merger or demise of some metropolitans because of astronomical production costs; the sickness of many small town dailies and weeklies from overeating canned copy; the migration of advertising dollars to television; the emergence of experienced papers as national newspapers—notably the N.Y. *Times, The Wall Street Journal,* and *The Christian Science Monitor;* the popularity of weekly news magazines which offer select news summaries in a captivating style and in an attractive package; and the replacement of newspaper extras with radio and television news bulletins.

THE CATHOLIC newspaper, beginning with Bishop England's *United States Catholic Miscellany,* published in Charleston in 1822, has reflected the development of the general community newspaper mainly in technology. Otherwise, for the most part, it has remained at the level of the American newspapers of General Washington's time: a government press and a party press. It is time we grew up.

The average American today has more to do during his leisure time than he can handle: bowling, Little League, parent-teacher drudgery, clubs, meetings, moonlighting. The competition for his attention and interest is intense and clever. How can the Church compete with the general news and review press, the slick picture magazines, the special press like the garden, boating, and crime magazines, the transistor at the bedside, the paperback, and the ubiquitous TV, when all these professionalized media knock themselves out trying to get the egg off their faces and get into the homes?

What is needed by the bishops' press today is a revitalized sense of pastoral mission—to the entire community. The diocesan press must be viewed as a pastoral instrument; but it must be allowed to be true to its nature as a journal of news and opinion. This is in the great American tradition of a noble and specialized calling. It must, moreover, be made thoroughly professional in its direction, management, contents and techniques. And it must be *free.* I do not mean it should be circulated without charge. That would be humorous. And though the diocesan press is as humorless as a bloodhound's face, free distribution would be fatal. No, I mean free in the sense that it must be emancipated

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from a smothering hierarchical, "official" character that cloaks most of its pages today. This "official" character serves to repulse the general community—including many, many loyal Catholics—by the suffocating mustiness of airless seminary rooms which clings to its managers. In sum, the house organ press, in my opinion, is ineffective for the demands of the modern Christian press apostolate: reclaiming the wounded world.

Monsignor John Tracy Ellis told the Eastern regional meeting of the Catholic Press Association last fall that a solution to the problem of the overemphasis on the "official" character of diocesan papers might lie in "the revival of a practice that was once fairly widespread throughout the American Church. This was the custom by which the local bishop had an official page in the weekly newspaper for which it was understood he was entirely responsible, and beyond that the editor and his staff were allowed every possible leeway in the exercise of their professional tasks. . . ."

One reason why the diocesan press must be emancipated is that the rising number of college-educated Catholics—and others in the potential audience—are not attracted by a clericalistic medium, stuffed with organizational trivia, column after column of mediocre writing, picture parades of Religious and the "saved" laity.

Fred Stein, editor and publisher of the Binghampton (N.Y.) Press, quoted in the U.P.I. *Reporter*, said: "Too many newspapers are content to rest in a comfortable cash-register existence, never stirring up controversy, always sticking to predictable partisan views, always harboring a whole herd of sacred cows, very careful not to offend the prejudices of the lowest common denominator of their readers. Such newspapers insult the intelligence of college students today. . . ." He was talking about the general press. He could say it again—about our papers.

There is another reason for putting the "official" look in the St. Vincent de Paul discard bag: finances. The merchants who support the press—any press—want it to be read, to be snatched up and devoured. That helps sell merchandise and service and good will. Too often the diocesan press boasts about circulation—when readership is the true test. The older methods of circulation-inflation—using school children to sell it or forcing it down the pastor's throat—are not going to work as the laity become more educated, more sophisticated, less docile, and less silent. Once they discover the reliability of the general press in covering significant Church news, and utilize the magazine press for background and depth, this new laity will not subscribe, let alone read, a house organ press.

THERE IS still another reason to improve the diocesan press: the health of the Church as an organism. As it generally looks now, the diocesan newspaper overdoes its work as an administrative bulletin. In these new and demanding times, it holds the pink mirror up to personalities, and to organizations of questionable viability. The result is a type of organizational narcissism—the parochial mind admiring itself, the parochial voice talking, the parochial ear listening and the parochial head nodding in biretted approval.

Over and above a renewed emphasis on the diocesan press's pastoral mission, still another important change is needed—though one may grant the need for exceptions. That is, the diocesan newspaper should be declericalized, both in outlook and in management. If the reading audience at which the diocesan paper is aimed is about ninety-five per cent lay; if the buying public its ads seek is ninety-five per cent lay; if the apostolic potential it should be trying to arouse is ninety-five per cent lay—then should not these estimates of its readership be more seriously considered, and its appeal be in direct proportion to the number of lay readers?

Clerical editors, unfortunately, are too much hobbled by intramural politics; they are too concerned about the displeasure of the ordinary, instead of the community. (One diocesan newspaper, on the eve of the Council, ran an eight-column picture spread across its front page illustrating how the ordinary was going to look in Rome! It was a fashion display; what he'd wear on this occasion, on that, and on another. Was the Church served by this show?) Moreover, it is unfair to saddle priests, pointed toward sacerdotal duties, with responsibilities so professional that they require years of training and schooling. Such priest-editors often become mere chancery flacks, ecclesiastical yes-men for whom editing the paper means keeping in the black and out of trouble. They must long for the eventual pastorate.

The function of an editor is to be a broker for new ideas and a communicator who stands astride the straits that separate the individual reader and the mainland of the world. Is this the way diocesan editors are functioning now? Similarly, the function of a reporter is to be engaged in the life process of his time—and dig for the stories that are part of it. He must, occasionally, cross-examine. Is this permitted in the diocesan press—or are the staffers merely copy-shovelers and rewriters of institutional publicity? Where are the diocesan newspapers' Restons, Lippmanns, Caters and Cousidines? Remember, it was Lenin who called

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newspaper a "collective propagandist and a collective organizer." Is this the way the diocesan press is being used today? Or is it, as the popes have urged, helping to form and inform public opinion? Is "holy liberty" permitted or is the policy one of strict, paranoic vigilance, apprehensive and narrow?

Recall the inspirational leadership given to the Catholic press during recent years, leadership that asked it to be attractive to college graduates (Pius XII); to impose itself on the attention of all (John XXIII); to be characterized by a kind of benevolent belligerence (Bishop Pursley); to put aside the parochial mind and present the true, Catholic image (Cardinal Agagianian); to interpret earlier and push more strongly the claims of the teaching Church (Cardinal Cushing); to be an active presence and a testimony (John XXIII).

Is this counsel being heeded? One points to the progress of the last decade. Fine. But ask any librarian to name you five great Catholic diocesan papers and he'll be stuck. Do our top Catholic laymen *insist* on grabbing up their diocesan paper as they would their favorite general newspaper? Does President Kennedy?

It is time for renewal. Renewal is preceded by reform. Reform by honest, professional criticism. A renewed diocesan press must not try to please all. Try it and you please no one. Let those who want parish bulletins and institutional circulars have the trivia concession; let the Religious and the seminary class of '42 not expect the entire community to be interested in their running account of intramural miscellany. The newspaper is not an extension of the classroom or the chancery.

But it is not only the Catholic who deserves a break: he world citizen, emerging, quite timidly, of course, rom the polemical age into an ecumenical era, with its harpened interest in the Church, must be respected s mature and schooled. Let us speak to this new thens. A renewed diocesan newspaper must be one hat stimulates, that grapples with the world and life. t cannot fear, avoid or repress controversy; it must e friendly to open questions, and give both sides. It ust have spiritual guts. It can present the teachings f the Church, comment on the news that is of special terest to Catholics, boost all that is good, true and eautiful, act as the bright, stimulating Christian conience in a community where a vacuum needs to be lled, offer a coverage in depth of significant events of e day—and print galleys of hard news professionally repared.

In this way it can be truly pastoral; not parochial ut pastoral. As it is now, the diocesan press is largely rned inward on a portion of the "saved" membership; must be turned outward in solicitation and concern r the community of the world. This, as I see it, is its astoral mission in our times. This is its responsibility. ut to exercise this responsibility it must be free.

THE SCREEN

Will Success Spoil E. A. Poe?

WHILE moviegoers, rightfully disappointed with the 1963 cinema fare, are waiting for the Big Ones to turn up, they may find some of the trivia on our screens to their liking. They won't find anything startling, but there is enough variety in the new trifles to attract audiences who aren't fussy.

Tony Curtis, back from his unhappy "Taras Bulba" romp in sixteenth-century costumes, is more at home in snappy modern apparel as the manager of an elaborate gambling-hotel at Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Beside his problems with running the place, getting along with his tough boss (Phil Silvers), placating a singer who is the boss's niece (Suzanne Pleshette) and keeping out of the way of his alimony-chasing ex-wife (Mary Murphy) across the California line, Tony is stuck with a six-year-old girl (Claire Wilcox) who is darling in the film's title role: "Forty Pounds of Trouble." Tony, who is all heart beneath his flip brassiness, just can't tell the girl that she is now an orphan; so he cares for the kid, gets Suzanne's help in entertaining her, and even gives way to the girl's desire-of-desires by taking her to Disneyland. Getting into California and escaping his ex-wife's lawyer (Kevin McCarthy) and private detectives proves quite an operation. And the chase through Disney's playground becomes a hilarious parody on the old Mack Sennett comedies.

Beautifully photographed in color, "Forty Pounds of Trouble" is a well-acted and amusing movie. Although Marion Hargrove's script seems rather derivative from Damon Runyon (especially the old movie of "Little Miss Marker"), it provides plenty of fun and jokes. Stan Margulies has given his picture a handsome production. The story is dragged out a little longer than need be, but director Norman Jewison keeps things moving at a fast pace. The film probably won't win any prizes, but it should win the hearts of sentimentalists who like the soft-heartedness well displayed by Curtis and his co-workers. For many, the tour of Disneyland alone will be worth the movie's box-office price.

DISNEY comes off better in Curtis's film than he does in his own "Son of Flubber," which is a sequel to "The Absent-Minded Professor." Like many sequels, this is more of the same—too much more. Again, Fred MacMurray is the professor who invents things, this time a flubber gas that does wonders in a football uniform and helps the home team on the gridiron. Although Fred's weather machine breaks all the windows and bottles and glasses in town at first, it proves a success when it comes up with a dry rain that grows vegetables as big as bushes. MacMurray has an enthusiastic cast

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working with him in all these attempts at fun and slapstick. I found their efforts somewhat exaggerated and finally tiresome, but flubber fans will no doubt roll in the aisles.

PRODUCER-director Roger Corman, who turned Poe's *Usher, Pit and Pendulum, Premature Burial, Black Cat,* and other stories into movies, seems intent on running the whole Poe gamut. But when he starts on the poetry, he runs a cropper. Except for some scary atmosphere and a large black bird, "The Raven" has almost no relation to Poe. As a satire on thrillers, however, it may win some audiences; Vincent Price, Peter Lorre, and Boris Karloff shoot the works in the macabre, but some viewers may not be able to tell whether the results are supposed to be funny or terrifying. If Poe were around, he'd probably exclaim: "Nevermore."

MARIA ANGELICA

(Excerpt from a missionary's letter)

"Maria Angelica is twelve. For a long time her mother knew the little girl had leprosy but she tried to keep it hidden, in horror of the day her daughter would be sent to the public leprosy camp.

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THE MOST interesting assets of "Cairo" are its shots of Egypt and the performance of a comparative newcomer, Richard Johnson. The story about a group of crooks pulling a caper stems from a W. R. Burnett novel which was made into an exciting movie several years ago and called "The Asphalt Jungle." Now this plot concerns a jewel robbery from a Cairo museum, but none of the characters, except for the Egyptian played by Johnson, really intrigue the viewer, and when they prove again that crime does not pay, they merely prove that crime does not pay. As a drug addict who has fallen into evil ways in the city, Johnson makes the Egyptian Ali come to life, and when he joins the ill-fated robbery, we understand why he needs the money —not to buy more drugs but to escape from the city and return to the farm he left behind. Following his story is worth this trip to "Cairo."

ALTHOUGH it has some stunning costumes and sets it is hard to figure out why "Madame" cost seven million dollars. It is an over-blown spectacle based on "Madame Sans Gêne," a play by Emile Moreau and Victorien Sardou. It tells the story of a carefree laundress and follows her career from 1792 when she aids the Revolutionists, to many years later when she is married to a duke whom Napoleon wants to put on the throne of Westphalia. The main trouble with the film as it is being shown in the United States, is its atrocious dubbing. The flat voices and ridiculous speeches are not only tiresome, but also laughable. Sophia Loren who plays the title role, plays it with plenty of verve so much in fact that she often has difficulty staying in her flimsy costumes. Robert Hossein is effective as her husband, and Julien Bertheau is fine as Napoleon. But "Madame" is the kind of ill-conceived joke that one can walk out on too easily. PHILIP T. HARTUNG

THE STAGE

Revival Time

I SUPPOSE we should be grateful for the current "School for Scandal," since it isn't often we get so accomplished and above all so properly English a production of the play. But skillful as the cast is, with all its gestures cutting the air finely, its speech meticulous and its costumes worn crisply and elegantly, and for a that the sets by Anthony Powell are faultlessly eighteenth century and the life exhibited on them perfect

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at home, I found the evening somewhat flat and pallid.

John Gielgud's direction struck me as lacking in inventiveness and vigor and his performance as Joseph Surface seemed deficient in the same qualities. Ralph Richardson, on the other hand, does a major job of reinterpretation as Sir Peter Teazle, although I'm not sure that his capering, antic, owlish deportment and oddly spaced and husky speech don't clash with the more conventional declamation and high artifice of the others. In any case, the production will be here for only a few more weeks and my strictures are not at all meant to discourage anyone from seeing it. (*At the Majestic*)

NOR would I wish to discourage the average theatregoer from seeing José Quintero's open-stage rendering of "Desire Under the Elms." If you are an average theater-goer, you are probably rather in awe of O'Neill and consider this play a modern classic, so that attending it is in the nature of an act of piety. Well, if you perform it, you will be rewarded by a production mounted with force and quite vivid detail and by some extremely interesting and energetic characterizations by George C. Scott in the role of Ephraim and, on a much smaller scale, Clifford A. Pellow and Lou Frizzell as the sons Simeon and Peter.

There are some soft spots, however. Rip Torn is an actor of special intelligence, but as Eben he is too introspective and directs too much of his utterance into his beard to hold his end up well, while Colleen Dewhurst, ordinarily a performer of immense talent and vitality, is curiously muted and monolithic as Abbie. More disturbing is the open-stage itself; it keeps trying to turn this heavy, coarse, brutally elegaic play into something more like an allegory of early America by Martha Graham. Her presence would not be altogether out of place, though. There are so many things to remember—where to stand, when to move so that every section of the audience gets its share of you, how and where to make your exits—that a choreographer is required to keep the cast from slithering, hopping and dancing out of control.

But what is most difficult for me—a non-enthusiast of O'Neill—to overcome, is a feeling that this tragedy-*manqué*, with its failures of rhetoric at all the crucial points, its vastly irksome "be ye's" and "hisn's" and allus's," its ponderous hefting of chunks of raw feeling and simultaneous hunger for an integument of significance, is moving inexorably away from credibility or interest. A noted critic-director recently described it to my presence as a "beautiful" play; I wanted to say to him, but held myself back, that he has a beautiful fidelity to relics. (*At the Circle-in-the-Square*)

IT IS harder to arrange devotional exercises for Robert E. Sherwood than it is for O'Neill, who for all his faults was a genuine playwright and wrote some plays that unlike "Desire Under the Elms" can still engage us. What Sherwood wrote I find it difficult to say, but he apparently retains his hold on *someone's* imagination, his having won the Pulitzer Prize some twenty years ago serving to keep the legend bright in certain quarters. He won it for "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," and that play may now be seen again as the first offering of the Phoenix Theatre's re-descent upon the Lower East Side. It is hard to say whether the play or the production is more preposterous, but the competition does have the effect of spreading our pity evenly between our fathers, who apotheosized Sherwood, and some of our contemporaries, who have wished to resurrect him.

The banality, the folksiness, the tedium, the reliance on our good will and investment in Lincoln rather than on one's own imagination! The cutting down of Lincoln to the level of Broadway theatrics, his personality a compound Daniel Boone and Edgar Guest and his destiny a matter of getting shoved along by his ambitious wife! *Alors*, the performances, the staging win after all: they make an unpleasant play detestable. Stuart Vaughn has directed and set the work in epic style, which is the equivalent of playing "Uncle Tom's Cabin" as though it were "Mother Courage." And Hal Holbrook, that master of the arts of make-up, has contrived to look like Lincoln, move like Andy Griffith and speak like Tennessee Ernie—in Illinois.

What a race of children we must be to have once admired and to tolerate now this thoroughgoing insult to intelligence and taste. But perhaps we value freedom of speech and expression more than anything. (*At the Phyllis Anderson*)

RICHARD GILMAN

After the Old Gods

In the dark inconsequence of night
a creature sometimes thrusts its snout
into a dream, as if to shove your knowledge out;
and sometimes ghosts of rats emerge to bite.

Not many of the pantheon you know from books
immerse themselves in that deep water
you swim through, numb in mind. Farther
that the Lethe of your sleep, they took

their shape from the unveined masses there
where you are darkest and most ignorant.
Their avatars are many: surly, bent
as rusted nails from rotted boards, they glare

like solder flaming in a crack of tin,
and then go out to harden cold as stone:
and yet the stone they turn to looks like bone . . .
all substances are metaphors of skin.

JACK MATTHEWS

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Close to the Madding Crowd

Crowds and Power. By Elias Canetti. Translated by Carol Stewart. Viking. $7.50.

by John P. Sisk

ONE inevitable result of modern specialization is that it impels man to counter-measures: at one extreme to a submission of himself to definition and boundary-defying irrational forces, at the other to a concentrated effort of intellect and imagination to discover some significant figure in what is to most of us less a carpet than a haphazard collection of brilliant patches. *Crowds and Power*, the work of a Bulgarian scholar now living in England, is such an effort. The patches from which it draws the threads of its pattern are ethnology, anthropology, comparative religion, psychiatry, sociology, symbolic logic, political science, economics and history. The sheer experience of the process of such an interdisciplinary search for meaning can be exhilarating, even when the meaning itself is of doubtful value. Here, I believe, it is of great value.

Crowds and Power is at once a scholarly and poetic analysis of the entrails of power, especially as power manifests itself in or operates through crowds. It is only in crowds, says Mr. Canetti, that man loses that elemental fear of the touch of the unknown that drives him to create distance around himself. With this opening observation he begins an immensely detailed examination of the nature and process of the crowd in all the shapes it assumes, of its recurrent symbols and of its embryonic forms—the crowd crystal and the pack. The crowd is displayed in action in primitive myth and ritual, in tribal, racial and national groupings, in religion, in peace, politics and war.

Perhaps the most compelling sections of the book have to do with what the author calls "the survivor" and with the nature and effects of the *command*. The survivor is the product of the crowd's demand for an invulnerable hero and of that hero's own need "to kill so that he can survive others" and so nourish an ever-growing sense of invulnerability. It is hard to imagine a more ruthless analysis of a type of leader our culture still, ironically, looks to for its salvation.

The command, for Canetti, is authority in action and therefore a prime manner of communicating power. Its sting tends to remain in the subject, and the stings of command, while they spur some men to achievement, accumulate in others to sinister effect unless they can be passed on, as the soldier or the executioner passes them on, or unless they can be gotten rid of temporarily in crowd action. But if commands pass painlessly through an Eichmann, they overburden and paralyze the schizophrenic with their stings, and thus he "succumbs to the illusion . . . of being in a crowd." Not even the commander escapes the effects of the command: its recoil engenders in him a potentially dangerous anxiety. The command, therefore, remains "the most dangerous single element in the social life of mankind."

Indeed, Mr. Canetti, whose implicit theme is man's fear of freedom, has given us the pathology of power. Where power accumulates there is secrecy, and "every secret is explosive, expanding with is own heat." Judgment is one of the most widespread of society's diseases. War ha always been popular because in i men can perish in crowds and thu escape what they fear most—deatl as individuals. The hallucinations o alcoholics show us the manner i which crowds appear in the huma mind, and the delusions of paranoi help us to understand the abuse o power by despots and dictators.

Mr. Canetti's materials are for th most part drawn from the past, bu his implications are always for th urgencies of the present. In a sens the entire book exists to give forc to a six-page epilogue on power i the modern world. Our characteris tics are those of the secularized "in crease pack," whose only faith is i production. "Here capitalism an socialism are . . . twin rivals in th same faith," interested less in de stroying each other than in surpass ing each other. Mr. Canetti has littl hope that the great "religions c lament" will offer effective resistanc to this "modern frenzy of increase, but he concedes the compelling a traction of Christ, the suffering an dying individual. Christianity, b placing value on man's soul, has a least helped him to feel assured c his earthly value.

Crowds and Power is often proli By asserting categorically when should suggest tentatively, it ofte plays into the hands of those specia ists who will resent its intrusion int their domains. It is too inclined to r ductive explanations in its efforts t show the relevance of primitive t modern institutions, and it is tc

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and such other monsters of the deep as the dimpled darling kills
while he cartwheels turns in the middle of the sea and the little fishes thril
with his loop-the-loops of ice-water and power-dives of crimson spray,
hitching a ride on a luxury liner when he decides to call it a day;
then waving goodbye to the captain with a wisecrack and a wink,
he's off again on his endless weekend, chattering in his crazy Chinese
which the dolphin reputedly speaks with incredible wit and ease—
pulling one up, giving one pause, and making one almost think.

ROBERT CULLEN

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ervaded by an almost Manichean uspicion of all forms of power. It is evertheless a tremendous book. rnold Toynbee is right when he says that it "will lift one's mind out of its ruts." I would add that it will make some of its readers long for the comfort of those ruts.

Ring Lardner: Humorist or Critic?

he Ring Lardner Reader. Edited by Iaxwell Geismar. Scribners. $7.50.

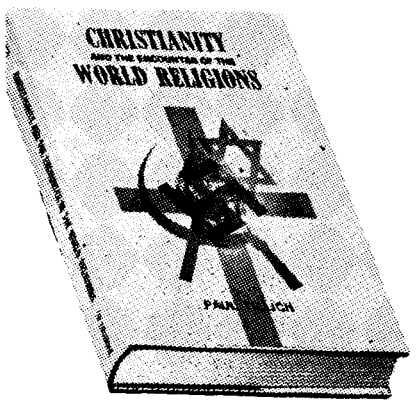
by William James Smith

F YOU ARE not a Ring Lardner n now you are not apt to become one. Lardner's heyday was from 1915 to 1930 and unless you encountered him then his appeal as a humorist will be mysterious. It was a fairly special taste even at the time, though his popularity was enormous and he was one of those rare writers who earn enough to live in palatial grandeur and drink themselves to death in luxury. But humor is a volatile essence and it has largely vanished from his pages, leaving behind something dry and bitter.

It is the style now to say that Lardner was a social critic rather than a humorist. This is a sad fate for a funnyman. The only thing left is to be taken up by the French Existentialists. This might well happen. I can see their film version of "Golden Honeymoon," with Jean Seberg as Mother.

It is not too implausible. The Existentialists would at least be on a sounder tack than those who want to make Lardner a social critic. It wasn't society that he was criticizing—it was life, and I doubt that he was doing it as consciously as he now appears to have been. His characters, with rare exceptions, such as Midge Kelly in "Champion," are not unlikable sorts. They are more to be laughed at than censured, and it is unfair to say that all the humor is gone. It takes a little getting used to—funny spellings and the solecisms of popular speech and schoolboy jokes—but once you accept it the ghost at least of the old comedy is apparent and enjoyable.

Lardner's range of comic devices was not great but the one he used constantly to great effect is a telling one. It is the comedy of inadvertent self-revelation. This is the method of the "You Know Me Al" stories and of all his best stories. Again there is the interesting exception—only in the case of truly unpleasant people such as Midge Kelly does he switch to third person telling. Lardner identified with most of his crea-



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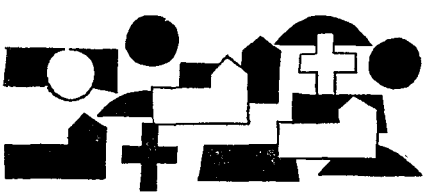

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tions and brought to them the wry affection that we reserve for our own shortcomings.

Lardner is a social critic indeed in the sense that any good writer is one. It is true that he pricked the balloons of Babbittry and the pomposities of the 1920's before other people quite realized what they were. But he would have done the same for whatever age he lived in. What he found horrid—and comic!—was not the society around him but people themselves. Like all the best and bitterest satirists he did not exempt himself from the scourge. Though he applied it lightly, he was knouted nonetheless.

Lardner did not attack social injustice or that old scapegoat, the Middle Class. He emerged from a middle-western, middle-class background and it was to the extent that life as he found it in the big world fell short of those standards that he found it deplorable. In his latter years he conducted a campaign against suggestiveness in popular songs, such as "Tea for Two."

Nor is there much reason for believing that old saw that is dragged out about every American humorist from Twain on down, that cruel convention bound his talents to a lesser scope than they might have reached. He wrote what he wanted to write. He was not bound by *The Saturday Evening Post* or *Cosmopolitan*. He set their standards. He wanted to be free of the onerousness of journalism, to be sure, but the "serious work" that he contemplated in its place was musical comedy.

In one of his typically self-deprecatory introductions to his books Lardner said, "It was written a chapter at a time and should be perused the same way, with, say, a rest of from seven weeks to two months between chapters. It might even be advisable to read one chapter and then take the book back to the exchange desk, saying you had made a mistake." The ironic humor aside, this is still not fair to himself, especially now, thirty or forty years later. One chapter at a time is not enough. He should be read in considerable quantities at a time because it is only that way that you can begin to get behind the outmoded literary conventions and the faded humor and see the skeleton of the personality which informs his work. It is a grim sight but an impressive one. Existentialists, take note.

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Writers' Feuds

The Fine Art of Literary Mayhem. By Myrick Land. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. $5.

by Philip Deasy

THIS BOOK is modestly sub-titled, "A Lively Account of Famous Writers and Their Feuds." Lively account it is, if you are disposed to find a slick magazine style and format lively. Vance Bourjaily, in a letter to the author which is quoted in full in Mr. Land's final chapter, refers to "the simple-minded reasons" people will enjoy a book like *The Fine Art* Somehow, "simple-minded" comes nearer hitting the mark than "lively."

The simplest of the simple-minded reasons for enjoying Mr. Land's book, or at least why I enjoyed it, is that it is so gossipy. Since in reading gossip we don't want to be distracted by the extraneous, Mr. Land is careful to keep his prose unsubtle and unobtrusive. He is a master of the incisive, one-sentence paragraph. His discreet use of the exclamation mark is calculated to evoke the proper horror or awe, as in, "Furthermore the fanatically religious Dostoevsky later reported, Turgenev even confessed openly to being an atheist!" Repetitions are equally discreet, as when, on p. 42, four lines from Pope are quoted and referred to as "by far the most witty attack against Cibber." On p. 48, the same lines are quoted but this time are referred to as merely "clever." The "basic incompatibility" of Turgenev and Tolstoy is mentioned on p. 56 and on p. 61 and each time is followed by the

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lefinitive proof Turgenev gave of hat incompatibility, "If I like the oup, I am certain Tolstoy will hate t—and vice versa."

But most effective of all is the ʏay Mr. Land prepares for titillaions to come with such outbursts s, "Whereupon Mr. Colley Cibber ıade one of the most sensational evelations in the history of literary ıayhem"; or "The reply [Sinclair ewis to Bernard DeVoto] was probbly the most violent denunciation f one writer by another in the enre history of literary feuds." Everyıing, in short, makes *The Fine Art* leal reading fare for milady as she ts under her hair drier at her ıendly beauty salon.

The famous writers Mr. Land ıus trivializes include, besides those ıentioned above, Samuel Johnson, oswell, Thackeray, Dickens, Henry ımes, Wells, Shaw, D. H. Lawrence ıd Hemingway. Living writers are ven the opportunity to bare their ıildish egos in the last chapter, fitıgly entitled, "Mr. Norman Mailer hallenges All the Talent in the ɔom." It should be mentioned that r. Land is devastatingly clever in e way he phrases his chapter titles, hich take up more than half a page ch and thus help pad the book.

About the gentlemen who so ıkedly exhibit their vanities in the ɜt chapter of *The Fine Art*, Vance ɔurjaily has an apt comment, "It ems to me that literary feuding is e of a number of fairly silly things iters do when they're not writing ll, whether from financial reasons psychic ones." Writing about ɔse feuds as Mr. Land does will no ubt strike many as fairly silly, too. ıe might expect to hear from the iters in question a collective cry m the grave to Mr. Land, paraasrased from the immortal words of rgenev to Dostoevski, "We beg ı to forget our existence."

REVIEWERS

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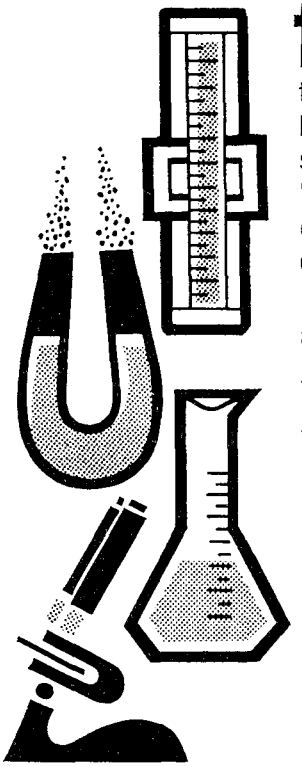
first things first



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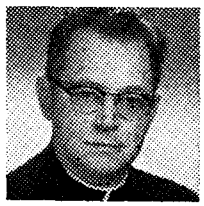

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Discussion Chairmen for the seven sessions of the symposium will be: Donald Thorman, Development Director of the Spiritual Life Institute; John Leo, Editor, *The Catholic Messenger;* Edward Marciniak, Chairman, Chicago's Commission on Human Relations; John Deedy, Editor, *The Pittsburgh Catholic;* Floyd Anderson, President, The Catholic Press Association of the U.S.; Douglas Roche, Associate Editor, *The Sign;* Robert Hoyt, Editor, *The Catholic Reporter.*

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